

LAUDERDALE COUNTY

Honorable Jimmy Sandlin

Lauderdale County Courthouse
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PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Access to childcare
2. Drug awareness in the community
3. Community awareness- Health Fairs

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19)

physical and mental well-being in the county.

Establish a local group home/assessment home for children with behavioral problems

Policy Council Action Steps:

- seek funding (grants, in kind, and donations)
- secure site location
- collaborate with local agencies in development of program

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Drug use (to include all mind-altering chemicals)

Policy Council Action Steps:

- develop awareness campaign strategy
- implement awareness campaign

Education - Children

learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

There is a lack of resource for treatment and academic development for youth who have chronic attendance and behavioral problems at school, who are at risk for dropping out of school, juvenile offenders, youth under child protective services, youth after completion of residential treatment, hard to serve in employment and training and at risk youth

Policy Council Action Steps:

- continue to make efforts to acquire funding for the Community Intensive Treatment Program for Youth (C.I.T.Y.). C.I.T.Y. is a comprehensive Day Treatment and alternative educational program
- implement a comprehensive day treatment/alternative education program (C.I.T.Y.)

Helping families who have children who are chronically truant address barriers that affect their school attendance

Policy Council Action Steps:

- establish a Truancy Review Board that will consist of six members. These members will include a juvenile probation officer, the county and city attendance officers, two parents (one from the county and one from the city), and a social worker from the Family Resource Center or Children's Policy Council. The duties of this board will be to hear complaints from parents as to why their children have been tardy or absent to school. The board will then make recommendations to the required agency for assistance. Building principals will make referrals. The Board will meet weekly to address complaints

Early Care and

Education - Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Access to childcare funding

Policy Council Action Steps:

- ask local legislatures to make childcare funding a priority
- ask local Children's Policy Council to sponsor a community forum re: childcare issues
- employer awareness through the local Chamber of Commerce

Child abuse and neglect

Policy Council Action Steps:

- advocate for issue 1. show connection to lack of adequate childcare funding and rise in abuse and neglect cases
- establish an awareness campaign
- educate Legislature in the connection between 1 and 2

Quality education and childcare

Policy Council Action Steps:

- educate public to what is quality education and childcare
- train workforce who already work in childcare
- expand and develop Pre-K program

Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Childcare campaign

Policy Council Action Steps:

- awareness campaign directed at businesses, churches, NACOLG, and the community in general to bring the childcare crisis (funding cuts, closures, etc.) to their attention. (Perhaps the CPC needs to establish a PR/Marketing Committee to develop campaigns for this and other issues the CPC chooses to tackle)
- develop a strategic plan- seek local resources & financial support (employer vouchers, employer-based or- sponsored centers, church support, church-based or-sponsored centers, local donors
- apply for grant funding- This would be a great fit for a Community and Faith-based grant, as well as many other Federal and foundation grants

Monthly Community Service/Health Fair Events

Policy Council Action Steps:

- poll community organizations to determine what activities and events already occur with which "we" might partner to develop monthly collaborative events to bring services&/or awareness of services to those in need. Existing events with which to partner might include health fairs, block parties, back-to-school events, free meal services, etc.)
- solicit new organizations to sponsor locations for months in which there is not an existing event. Churches will be prime candidates
- publicize with community organizations and solicit their participation at each monthly event

Community services networking database

Policy Council Action Steps:

- providing detailed information to community services (government/social/community services, churches, education & training providers, career services, healthcare providers) and encourage them to participate in the network
- finalize initial commitments/contracts/finances from community service organizations that choose to participate
- apply for funding to acquire necessary software to participate in the network
- collaborate with the Loaves and Fishes program to implement a community service advocate that will refer needy families to the appropriate resources available to assist their needs

Parent Involvement and Skills - Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Lack of community awareness of magnitude of violence and drug use

Policy Council Action Steps:

- develop awareness campaign strategy
- find venues for disseminating information

Policy Recommendation

1. Ask our local Legislatures to make childcare funding a priority.

